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DOE Cites Washington TRU Solutions for Nuclear Safety Violations

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The Department of Energy (DOE) today notified Washington TRU Solutions (WTS) that it will fine the company \$192,500 for violations of the department's nuclear safety requirements.

The Preliminary Notice of Violation (PNOV) issued today cites a number of deficiencies that led to a series of low-level plutonium uptakes by workers at a WTS mobile facility (MOVER) stationed at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) in Livermore, Calif. The violations reflected WTS' limited understanding of the design and operational limitations of the MOVER facility, a portable waste processing facility designed to be transported to and operated at various DOE sites. The uptakes and associated violations occurred at LLNL from April 2004 to August 2004.

“Although no regulatory exposure limits were exceeded, the consequences had the potential to be more significant,” said John Shaw, Assistant Secretary for Environment, Safety and Health. “It's important that these problems be corrected before a more serious event occurs.”

The Price-Anderson Amendments Act of 1988 authorizes the Energy Department to undertake regulatory actions against contractors for violations of its nuclear safety requirements. The enforcement program encourages DOE contractors to identify and correct nuclear safety deficiencies at an early stage, before they contribute to or result in more serious events. WTS is the contractor that manages and operates the department's Waste Isolation Pilot Project in Carlsbad, New Mexico.

Additional details on this and other enforcement actions are available on the Internet at <http://www.eh.doe.gov/enforce/>

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